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NPIC/TSSG/RED-1954/69
10 December 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR: Executive Officer, Technical Services &
Support Group

SUBJECT : Preparedness for Safe Evacuation in Case
of Fire

1. I noticed recently in the minutes of one of the TSSG morning Staff Meetings that you mentioned the fact that certain areas of the Building weren't properly safeguarded in case of fire. This brought to my mind a situation which I have brought to the attention of various personnel during the past several years and which occurred to me again in our last fire drill; which is that the stairways in this building are not equipped with emergency lighting.

2. As you know, it is not unusual for fires to be of electrical origin and for large blocks of electrical circuits to be turned off in such situations; and likewise, it is not unusual for other types of emergencies to incur or relate to a loss of power; which, in turn, may result in disabling the elevators and the lights and make imperative the use of the stairs if the Building must be evacuated.

3. I am sure you appreciate the potential danger that could result from use of these stairways by large numbers of personnel in an emergency situation under the best of circumstances, but certainly this danger would be compounded many times if there were no illumination in the stairways. While hoping that we never have to use them, I recommend that emergency lighting equipment be installed at each of the stair landings.

4. To my knowledge, at least some of the work spaces do not have emergency lighting equipment--the Research & Engineering Division for instance. I remember a non-emergency situation when all the power was turned off in the RED spaces. It was extremely difficult to move around in these spaces under those circumstances and it resulted in a few bumped heads and

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stubbed toes before some candles were brought in--and no one was in a hurry to get anywhere. I recommend that the need for emergency lighting be reviewed throughout the Building, but conclude that the stair well situation is by far the most dangerous.



Research & Engineering Division

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